

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRITIC, RENAISSANCE SCHOLAR LEO STEINBERG
TO GIVE 1982 ANDREW W. MELLON LECTURES

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 22, 1982. Professor Leo Steinberg, eminent critic and art historian known for studies in Renaissance, baroque and twentieth-century art, will deliver the 1982 Andrew W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts. Entitled "The Burden of Michelangelo's Painting," his series of seven lectures will be given in the National Gallery of Art's East Building auditorium at 4 p.m. on consecutive Sundays beginning May 2 and continuing through June 13. The series is open to the public at no charge.

Concentrating on major works from three different periods of Michelangelo's career, Professor Steinberg will discuss the early Doni Tondo, a circular painting also known as The Holy Family, and the Renaissance master's two monumental projects in the Sistine Chapel. The first, which covers the chapel's ceiling, was completed between 1508 and 1512. It depicts human history from the Creation through Noah. Adorning the wall behind the chapel's altar is the second, The Last Judgment, on which he labored from 1534 through 1541.

The word "burden" as applied to Michelangelo's paintings is meant in a threefold sense. It refers to the often

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painful, always burdensome process of their creation. It refers, secondly, to their reception, the daunting task of perceiving and interpreting what the paintings show. And it refers to the weight of intrinsic meaning embodied in Michelangelo's imagery.

The topics for specific lectures are:

"The Doni Tondo and Its Reception" (May 2)

"The Doni Tondo: Christianity in a Nutshell" (May 9)

"Noah's Flood, and the Task of the Ceiling" (May 16)

"Surviving the Deluge" (May 23)

"The Last Judgment as Merciful Heresy" (May 30)

"The Last Judgment and the Included Self" (June 6)

"The Last Judgment and Environs" (June 13).

Since 1975, Professor Steinberg has served as Benjamin Franklin Professor of the History of Art at The University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. From 1961 to 1975, he was Professor of Art History at Hunter College and the City University of New York's Graduate Center, where he co-founded its art history program.

Professor Steinberg is a graduate of the Slade School of Art, University of London, and the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. His publications include Borromini's San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane (Garland, 1977), Michelangelo's Last Paintings (Oxford, 1975) and Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art (Oxford, 1972). Other published works are "Leonardo's Last Supper," Art Quarterly (1973), "The Philosophical Brothel: Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon," ArtNews (September and
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October 1972), Resisting Cézanne: Picasso's Three Women," Art in America (November/December 1978), and "The Line of Fate in Michelangelo's Painting," Critical Inquiry (Spring 1980). He is a Fellow of the American Academy, Rome, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the University College of London.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer) or Mary Dyer, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. area code (202) 842-6353.